(c) and (d) The project proposals have been received in the Ministry of Tourism. The projects are sanctioned within the same financial year provided all the formalities are completed by the State Government.

Declining Trend in Hotel Occupation

2112. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to State:

(a) whether tourists and hotel occupancy showed decline in the new millennium from previous new year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures proposed to attract foreign tourists?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) There was a decline in occupancy rate in approved categories of hotels during January 2000 as compared to January 1999. However, the foreign tourist arrivals has shown an upward trend. The reasons for decline in occupancy rate of approved hotels include high rates of published hotel tariffs in metro cities and the decline in business and conference traffic.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to attract more foregin tourists include development and improvement of tourist infrastructure facilities, publicity and marketing efforts in the overseas markets and use of information technology.

Declaration of Durga Hatkoti Temple as a Pilgrim Centre

2113. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to State:

(a) the number of Tourist Pilgrim Centes identified by Government during the last three years, their names and funds allocated to each pilgrim centre;

(b) whether Government will consider to include Durga Hatkoti Temple for Tourist Pilgrim Centre during 2000-2001;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Ministry of Tourism in consultation with the State Governments have identified 61 pilgrim centres for tourism development. However, Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance for projects/ schemes which are prioritized in consultation with them every year. During the last three years an amount of Rs. 508.00 lakhs has been sanctioned for 27 projects covering wayside amenities, public conveniences, drinking water facilities, accommodation unites, etc. at pilgrim centres such as Tirupati, Bodhgaya, Ujjain, Nizamuddin, Amritsar, Rameshwaram, Ponta Sahib, Jwalaji, etc.

(b) to (d) Ministry of Tourism has not received any proposal from the State Government to include Durga Hatkoti Temple as a Tourist Pilgrim Centre during 2000-2001. However, Central Government has provided financial assistance for construction of a Tourist Lodge at Hatkoti in 1987-88.

Objectives of Celebrating "India Tourism Week'

2114. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government celebrated India Tourism Week recently at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi;

(b) if so, the main objects/highlights of these celebrations and expenditure incurred thereon.

(c) whether Government were able to create widespread awareness regarding the Indian tourism product, its potential and the impact which tourism can make on the various sector of the economy; and

(d) if so, with what results indicating also tourism challenges in the new millenium and budgetary allocations made during this year as compared to previous financial year?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) India Tourism Week was celebrated from 19th to 25th January, 2000 in New Delhi. India International Tourism Expo & Mart from 22nd to 24th January, 2000 in New Delhi at Paragati Maidan was held as part of the India Tourism Week.